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S E C R E T SECTION 01 OF 02 DJIBOUTI 000523

SIPDIS

STATE FOR OFFICE OF THE DEPUTY SECRETARY
STATE ALSO FOR AF, AF/E, S/CT, DS/DSS/IP AND DS/DSS/ITA

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TAGS: [PREL](#) [PTER](#) [ASEC](#) [PINR](#) [DJ](#) [RU](#)

SUBJECT: ENHANCING WORLDWIDE COUNTERTERRORISM COOPERATION
WITH RUSSIA

REF: STATE 71826

Classified By: AMBASSADOR MARGUERITA RAGSDALE.
REASONS 1.4 (B) AND (D).

11. (C) Ambassador met April 7 at the Russian Embassy with Russia's Ambassador to Djibouti Alexandre Bregadze to note Deputy Minister Trubnikov's meeting with Deputy Secretary Armitage and to discuss the advancement of U.S.-Russian common interests in prosecuting the global war on terrorism. (see reftel) Ambassador told Bregadze that the U.S. believes there is a need to work more closely with Russia in counterterrorism. She noted that while Cold War images over the past decade have hindered bilateral cooperation between the U.S. and Russia on counterterrorism, we are now in a new era where the implications of terrorism for both nations are real.

12. (S) Bregadze responded that he had also received communication from his government to develop more broader cooperation with the U.S. He had been fully briefed on Deputy Secretary Armitage's meeting with Minister Trubnikov. Bregadze added that his mission had made an effort in this area with the American Embassy in the past, but had detected what he described as "a measure of reluctance" to engage. Ambassador responded that some of the concerns Bregadze expressed may relate to the previous state of relations between Russia and the United States or of language facility. The new era, however, now requires change. She pledged the full cooperation of the Embassy and hoped that he would also reciprocate with his mission staff. Ambassador conveyed to Bregadze, the name of Embassy's Regional Affairs Officer (RAO), who would be in a position to discuss with his Russian counterpart more technical aspects of our counterterrorism efforts.

13. (C) Ambassador also stated that the Embassy has worked with Djibouti as part of the Anti-Terrorism Assistance initiative of the U.S. to implement training of Djiboutian police and other law enforcement personnel in explosive incident countermeasures, post-blast investigations, VIP protection, hostage-taking negotiations and several other courses aimed at deterring and/or disrupting terrorist acts. She told Bregadze that Embassy's Regional Security Officer, with responsibility for Mission Security, would be able to brief his Russian counterpart on this training program.

14. (S) Bregadze agreed and seemed pleased by the U.S. desire to cooperate. He stated, however, that he had a very small staff in Djibouti and none dedicated to counterterrorism. Yet there is an officer based at the Russian Embassy in Addis Ababa, he said, who has this portfolio and also services Djibouti. Bregadze said he would ask this officer to get in touch with Embassy Djibouti's RAO.

15. (C) Comment: The Russian Ambassador is personable and an informed interlocutor, reads avidly, and selectively, has shared specific items with Ambassador, and appears to have a good grasp of U.S. strategic and economic interests in Africa and the Middle East. He sees radical Islam, at the root of much of Middle East terrorism, as an ideology of poverty that has replaced ideologies such as Communism. He sees no repeat no base for radical Islam in Djibouti. On Somalia, Bregadze expressed the belief that a federation of loosely associated states in Somalia proper might be the best route to peace there because of the intractable nature of tribal conflict. He also has expressed his conviction that no solution to the problem in Somalia is possible absent cooperation and input of Ethiopia.

16. (C) Comment continued: In response to Ambassador's comment on the difficulties of attracting staff to hardship posts in Africa, Bregadze stated that Russia's Foreign Ministry has a similar difficulty. He said the problem is greater than the preferences of his country's diplomats. It's a matter of lack of bodies as experienced diplomats leave the Foreign Service for more attractive opportunities abroad or in the private sector.

17. (C) Comment continued: Ambassador Bregadze served at Russia's mission in Paris as Cultural Attache and attended France's L'Ecole Nationale de Science Politique. End comment.

